GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1687
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2001
DURBAN WORLD CONFERENCE
RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the recent World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban failed to take note of the discrimination suffered by the Socially Backward Classes, including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the declaration adopted at the Conference and the extent to which Indian view point was accommodated in the conference?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a) & (b) The UN General Assembly had decided vide its resolution 52/111 of December 1997, that the theme of the Third World Conference, held in Durban from August 30th - September 8th, 2001, should be Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Discrimination based on grounds unrelated to this theme, e.g. discrimination based on social and economic backwardness, was not on the agenda of the Durban Conference.

(c) India`s consistent and principled view has been that racism is an affront to human dignity and anathema to the values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and needs to be rejected unequivocally. Every effort should be made through legislation, education, development and the faithful implementation of international human rights norms and obligations to prevent and eliminate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. This view is shared by other members of the NAM and is enshrined and reflected in the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference.